

STAT

Page Denied

STAT

NINTH PLENUM SPEECH OF LEON STASIAK
ON INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION
AND RAISING STANDARD OF LIVING IN POZNAN WOJEWODZTWO, POLAND

Nowe Drogi
 Warsaw, Oct 1953

[The following report of Leon Stasiak, First Secretary of the Poznan Wojewodztwo Committee of the PZPR, was given at the Ninth Plenum of the KC PZPR (Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party), held in Warsaw on 29-30 October 1953.

The report was given at the plenum as an amplification of the featured report of Premier Boleslaw Bierut, "Task of Party in Struggle to Raise Standard of Living of Workers in Current Phase of Building Socialism." An English-language translation of Bierut's report is available in the PAP (Polish Press Agency) release of 6 November 1953, pages 1-44.]

The theses of the present plenum point out how to extract latent reserves in agricultural production and how to use them in raising the standard of living.

The problem of raising agricultural production is especially important in Poznan Wojewodztwo, where agricultural production should be much greater than it has been up to now.

It is a blot on the wojewodztwo party organization that grain purchases this year were smaller than for the same period last year.

Let me discuss the problem of increasing the strength and influence of the party in the village. In 1953 our party organization in the villages made no progress. Why? Because the party can grow only when it is working with the peasants, when it takes a stand against kulak exploitation, when it gives special attention to the various needs of the peasant, and when it has a definite program for his welfare. The party can grow in the village only when it shows an interest not only in the grain purchasing drives, but also in all matters of vital concern to the village. The working peasant will be anxious to join the party only when the party makes an effort to aid him in the struggle for increased agricultural production and a rise in the standard of living.

During the current purchasing drive, we tried to determine the effectiveness of the distribution of goods, especially building materials, allocated for the peasant from the free market pool. We found a large number of petitions or requests buried in the commercial divisions of the people's councils. The peasants have not made any more requests since the pending ones have not received any attention.

Included in the requests were orders for bricks. We found that about 6 million bricks were left over from the allocation of the previous periods, and that the allocation for the fourth quarter of 1953 amounted to another 6 million. There is also enough cement to cover all pending requests.

STAT

To improve the work of the party organizations in the village, we must remove all barriers surrounding them. If we remain a closed group and do not accept working peasants as new members, there is danger of the party becoming estranged from nonparty peasants, and there is danger of favoritism and clan-nishness. Naturally, this weakens our political work and does great damage.

Our party organizations seldom discuss matters of interest to the village. At general village or party meetings, when party members among the peasants bring up certain grievances, the party activist conducting the meeting, calls it "chronic complaining" unbecoming a party member, since all party members are supposed to be leading workers. Because of this attitude, the party organiza-tions are losing their influence in the village. Party members who take this attitude cannot expect to win the respect of the village. Many party members who disapprove of this attitude keep silent, become less active, and very often stop attending meetings.

Many party members do not have the proper attitude toward the medium peas-ant. They fear that if his lot improves greatly he will hesitate in joining the government-sponsored producers' cooperative movement.

Some claim that we should not try to increase agricultural production, that we should not make an effort to provide the peasant with two cows and several pigs, or should not help him increase per-hectare yields, because in achieving these things he will be getting rich. These comrades do not under-stand that by their attitude they are obstructing the increase in agricultural and commodity production so urgently needed by the country. These comrades do not understand that their attitude drives a wedge between the peasant and the government, and makes the work of the kulak much easier.

It is the realization of the party line as regards the medium peasant, as emphasized by the present plenum, that will make him grateful to the people's authority, and will increase his confidence in the government and the party. We must carry on political work with party activists at all levels, from the village to the wojewodztwo, explaining to them that it is most important for them to understand that the party policy is right, since it increases concern for the individual peasant farms of the working peasant. The party activists must understand that it is consistent with our program for socialist transforma-tion of the village.

The attitude of some activists toward the poor peasantry is most harmful. When a peasant complains of his difficulties - shortage of ~~food~~, ~~house in~~ disrepair - they reply that ~~some~~ ~~land~~ ~~will~~ be cooperatives and then everything will be settled. They also reply that there will be new houses, one next to another, and a garden plot for each. Then the peasant will have everything.

This approach to the matter does not conform to the party line. It means turning our back on the working peasant, and for all practical purposes driving the poor peasant into the arms of the kulaks. The results of this attitude have been apparent in the current grain purchasing drive. Lack of political work with the working peasant is often accompanied by an indulgent attitude toward the kulak.

Comrad Bierut branded this as political blindness to the activities of the kulaks. Since the kulaks are proportionally most numerous in Poznan Wojewodztwo, this is especially pertinent to our party organizations.

STAT

For example, in Gniezno Powiat, 12 percent of the farms comprise 43 percent of the total cultivated land. There is no doubt that this constitutes economic strength, and can become political strength if we do nothing to oppose kulak activities or limit kulak exploitation. Because of our indulgent attitude, the kulak often becomes a political influence and persistently operates in the village.

Our people's councils are often under fire from kulak political influence. This year's grain purchasing drive showed the brazenness of the kulaks in our area.

The kulak cannot tolerate discipline in the interests of the people's state. The kulaks have tried to organize the village to break down this discipline. Some of our activists have not understood that the state can and must use effective measures to break down kulak resistance.

We must admit that the difficulties encountered so far in the grain purchasing drive are due, among other things, to our liberal attitude toward kulak wrangling.

Lack of work with the poor peasantry leads to kulak boldness. In addition, lack of opposition to the kulak does not arouse our party organizations to increased efforts to strengthen their organizational and political influence and to intensify their work among the peasant poor, and thus weakens our position.

I shall now discuss strengthening our present socialist position in the village.

The quality, level, wealth, and economic successes of the existing producers' cooperatives will influence the development of new cooperatives, especially in Poznan Wojewodztwo. We have had some success in this field, but up to now the small number of model cooperatives has blinded us to the fact that a much larger number still require much care and assistance.

Our publicity campaigns still insist on publicizing this small group of model cooperatives. What of the other cooperatives? They have been limping along, squabbling with the kulaks who have gained entry into the cooperatives. They have not received proper agronomical and other aid.

We are rightly demanding that the cooperatives lead the way but this cannot be achieved by words only. It is not enough to say, "Lead." Political and economic leadership by a cooperative can be achieved only with efficient management, with better working conditions for members, and with opportunities to members to increase their wealth. A member of a producers' cooperative will fight for the development of the cooperative only when he is benefited personally.

This is especially important to us because the producers' cooperatives in Poznan exist in an environment of medium peasants, who are efficient farmers and who are not impressed by mere statements of so many cows or 16-18 quintal yields per hectare.

This is one side of the activities of producers' cooperatives. There is still another side, protection of the peasant from the kulak. Some comrades are under the impression that once the producers' cooperative has been organized, the struggle with the kulak is finished. The truth is that kulak opposition and damage is greater after the organization than before. Before the cooperative is organized, the kulak says to himself: "Well, it has not yet been organized; we must prevent its organization. It is not yet a real threat." After the organization of a producers cooperative in a village, the kulak feels that a yoke has been placed on his neck and makes every effort to break up the cooperative. Our comrades have not properly appreciated this.

STAT

The theses on strengthening the socialist elements in the village point out that we must strengthen the cooperatives economically and give them protection against the kulak. This must be offensive protection, which means that we must not give the kulak an opportunity to develop his activities; we must take the initiative and ruin his plans.

To realize the guiding principles of the present plenum we must have adequate cadres. There is too great an exodus of rural youth to the city and industry. We even had difficulty in getting the required number of applicants for the Higher Agricultural School. Our publicity campaigns extol Nova Huta and industry but do not mention the MTS, the producers' cooperatives, the state farms. Are they not also important, do they not also require special technology? It is clear that youth has great admiration for technology. The problem then is to point out to the youth that many important things are taking place in the village, that we are working toward a new village of modern technology, complicated machinery, and agricultural science which will unveil the secrets of nature and greatly multiply the results of man's efforts.

We have not worked properly with the village youth. It is significant that only 1,528 of a total number of 25,000 party members of village organizations are 25 years of age and under. Such party organizations are listless. This is due not only to the great exodus of the youth from the village but also to the weakness of ZMW (Związek Młodzieży Polskiej, Union of Polish Youth) activities and the weakness of the party work among the village youth.

This year's grain purchasing drive brought to light a great many shortcomings in the work of the people's councils in the wojewodztwo. In many instances they are not yet a sharp enough instrument in the class struggle, and often even submit to kulak pressure. Therefore we must take more interest in the work of the local people's councils, and give them effective political aid to bring them closer to the mass of working peasants and to carry out their tasks efficiently.

The present grain purchasing drive in our wojewodztwo exposed all the weaknesses of our party work, the weakness of our village organizations, and the inadequacy of our leadership. At today's plenum, the Central Committee is not only pointing the way but also giving us powerful means with which to achieve these tasks.

- E N D -

STAT